

Message Text

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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 3 BANGKOK 9783

EXDIS

NOFORN

E.O. 11652: XGDS-2
TAGS: PEPR, PBOR, PINT, CB, VM
SUBJECT: SRV VICE FONMIN VO DONG GIANG DISCUSSES VIET-CAM-
BODIAN RELATIONS

SUMMARY: A RELIABLE WESTERN JOURNALIST HAS PROVIDED US HIS
NOTES ON A FIVE-HOUR EVENING CONVERSATION HE AND SOME OTHER
WESTERN JOURNALISTS HELD IN MID-MARCH WITH SRV VICE FOR-
EIGN MINISTER VO DONG GIANG. CONVERSATION WAS AN OFF-
RECORD BACK-GROUNDER, AND SOURCE MUST BE PROTECTED. EXTENSIVE
EXCERPTS ARE CITED BELOW. GIANG DISCUSSED THE HISTORY OF CON-
FLICT, IDEOLOGICAL AND OTHERWISE, IN RELATIONS BETWEEN THE
VIETNAMESE AND CAMBODIAN COMMUNIST PARTIES, EMPHASIZING
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ESPECIALLY THE "DEVIATIONS" OF CAMBODIAN PM POL POT. GIANG
STATED THAT VIETNAMESE TROOPS NOT ONLY PARTICIPATED IN THE
"LIBERATION" OF CAMBODIA BUT ALSO ENTERED PHNOM PENH WITH
THE KHMER "LIBERATORS". HE SPEAKS FAVORABLY OF SIHANOUK.
HE DESCRIBES THE PLOT AGAINST POL POT, LIQUIDATION CAMPAIGNS,
AND THE FATE OF FIRST CPK SECRETARY GENERAL SON NGOC MINH
HE PASSES ON A REPORTEDLY PURLOINED CAMBODIAN ANALYSIS OF

PHNOM PENH'S ENEMIES. HE IMPLIES CRITICISM OF THE PRC, CALLS "AMERICAN IMPERIALISM" THE PERMANENT ENEMY, AND HINTS THAT THE SOVIET UNION MIGHT EVEN BE AMONG THE "INTERNATIONAL REACTIONARIES." HIS COMMENTS CONTAIN CONVINCING EVIDENCE THAT HANOI INTENDS TO AID THE CAMBODIAN PEOPLE IN THEIR ALLEGED EFFORT TO OVERTHROW POL POT. "EITHER THE REGIME CHANGES ITS STANCE OR THE (CAMBODIAN) PEOPLE WILL CHANGE THE SITUATION", GIANG ASSERTED. END SUMMARY.

1. DISCUSSING THE HISTORICAL RELATIONS AMONG THE COMMUNIST PARTIES OF INDOCHINA, SRV CIE FOREIGN MINISTER VO DONG GIANG SAID THAT UNTIL 1951 THERE WAS OF COURSE ONE INDO-CHINA PARTY. IN FEBRUARY 1951, IN A VIETNAMESE INITIATIVE, ACCORDING TO GIANG, IT WAS DECIDED THAT THE THREE COUNTRIES HAD DIFFERENT PURPOSES AND THEREFORE THREE SEPARATE PARTIES WERE NEEDED. FROM THAT TIME EACH COUNTRY HAD ITS OWN PARTY BUT THE NOTION OF SOLIDARITY CONTINUED. COMMENT: (IT IS ONLY OF HISTORICAL INTEREST NOW TO RECORD THAT THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF INDO-CHINA, FORMED IN 1930, WAS PUBLICLY AND FORMALLY ABOLISHED IN 1946. GIANG CONFIRMED WHAT WE HAVE ALWAYS ASSUMED TO BE THE CASE -- THAT THE "ABOLITION" OF THE CPI WAS A PROPAGANDA PLOY. END COMMENT)

3. IN 1953 IENG SARY AND POL POT (SIC) RETURNED TO HANOI. SUBSEQUENTLY, THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF KAMPUCHEA (CPK) WAS KILLED "UNDER UNUSUAL CIRCUMSTANCES" CONFIDENTIAL

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IN 1962. (AT END OF CONVERSATION, GIANG REVEALED THAT SON NGOC MINH WAS THE FIRST SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE CAMBODIAN PARTY AND THAT HE WAS ASSASSINATED.) FROM 1953 TO 1960 THERE WERE TWO LINES IN THE CPK. ONE LINE CONTENDED THAT THE VARIOUS GROUPS WITHIN CAMBODIA SHOULD FIGHT THE PARTIES OUTSIDE THE COUNTRY (COLONIALISTS AND IMPERIALISTS). THE OTHER LINE ESPOUSED THE POLICY THAT THE PARTY SHOULD FIGHT TO OVERTHROW SIHANOUK. THE LINES BECAME EVEN MORE DISTINCT AFTER U.S. IMPERIALISM ENTERED THE PICTURE IN 1954. AFTER 1954 SIHANOUK CARRIED THE BANNER OF FIGHTING IMPERIALISM, THE FIRST LINE. FOLLOWERS OF THE SECOND LINE, LED BY POL POT, DID NOT WANT TO COOPERATE WITH SIHANOUK. THIS DISAGREEMENT WAS THE REASON FOR THE CPK'S DIFFICULTIES IN 1967-69.

3. ACCORDING TO GIANG, AMERICAN IMPERIALISM INTERVENED AT A VERY TIMELY MOMENT. LATER, EVEN POL POT AGREED THAT THERE SHOULD BE A NATIONAL FRONT AGAINST U.S. IMPERIALISM, ESPECIALLY AFTER THE LON NOL COUP OF 1970.

4. THE FIRST LINE ALSO MEANT SOLIDARITY WITH VIET-NAM AND LAOS, AND THE UPHOLDING OF THE SOLIDARITY OF THE THREE

PEOPLES. BUT THE SECOND LINE DID NOT WANT SUCH SOLIDARITY.
ITS SUPPORTERS WANTED TO WORK ALONE.

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5. AN ADDITIONAL DISPUTE REVOLVED AROUND POWER. THE POL
POT GROUP IN FACT WAS POWERLESS, BECAUSE THEY RETURNED FROM
FRANCE WITHOUT REVOLUTIONARY EXPERIENCE, AND THEIR ATTITUDE
TOWARD FIGHTING THE U.S. WAS INCORRECT. "HONESTLY",
GIANG SAID, "AMONG THE PEOPLE SIHANOUK HAD THE MOST PRESTIGE.
COMMUNISTS WHO USED SIHANOUK HELD SECOND PLACE, AND POL
POT'S GROUP HAD THE LEAST PRESTIGE."

6. THE FIRST LINE HELD SIMILAR VIEWS TO THOSE OF VIET-NAM.
THE VIETNAMESE COMMUNISTS WISHED TO UNITE THE PEOPLE TO
FIGHT THE OUTSIDE ENEMY. "WE HAVE UPHELD THE NOTION OF
THE SOLIDARITY OF THE PEOPLE UNDER ALL CIRCUMSTANCES,"
SAID GIANG. BUT POL POT WAS OPPOSED TO THIS IDEA, GIANG CON-
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TINUED. FROM THAT TIME ON, HE HAS BEEN GUILTY OF SLANDERING THE CPK BY CHARGING THAT VIET-NAM WISHED TO CONTROL THE CPK. THIS WAS A "SHEER FABRICATION".

7. BUT "REALITY IN EVERY COUNTRY HAS ALREADY SHOWN WHICH POLICY SHOULD BE FOLLOWED", GIANG ASSERTED. EVENTUALLY, POL POT WAS FORCED BY "REALITY, NOT VIET-NAM, TO FOLLOW THIS POLICY". TOWARD THE END OF THE STRUGGLE HOWEVER, POL POT RETURNED TO HIS ORIGINAL IDEA. HE CONDEMNED SIHANOUK. HE CONTENTED THAT NO NATIONAL FRONT HAD EVER EXISTED. GIANG SAID, "ALTHOUGH SIHANOUK SHOULD HAVE BEEN HEAD OF STATE FOREVER, POL POT DISCARDED HIM." IN 1975 AND 1976 THE NATIONAL FRONT WAS COMMEMORATED, BUT NOT IN 1977. POL POT ALSO BEGAN TO SAY THAT HE DID NOT WANT SOLIDARITY WITH VIET-NAM. "WE CAN CITE THE WARMEST THANK YOU'S COMING FROM POL POT BOTH BEFORE AND AFTER LIBERATION OF CAMBODIA. WE WILL LATER PUBLISH THEM", SIAD GIANG.

8. BUT THESE THANKS WERE CONTRADICTORY BECAUSE POL POT WANTED ISOLATION. "WHY? WHY NOT SOLIDARITY?" GIANG ASKED RHETORICALLY. "IS IT BECAUSE VIET-NAM WANTS TO ESTABLISH AN INDOCHINA FEDERATION?" ACCORDING TO GIANG, THE INDOCHINA FEDERATION ONLY EXISTED WHEN THE INDOCHINA COMMUNIST PARTY EXISTED. IT WAS A SLOGAN ONLY TO FIGHT WITH SOLIDARITY AGAINST THE COMMON ENEMY, SAID GIANG. THE IDEA WAS INCORPORATED IN THE INDOCHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY CONSTITUTION, BUT THE SITUATION THEN CANNOT BE COMPARED WITH TODAY. IN THE CONSTITUTION, THE IDEA OF A FEDERATION WAS CLEARLY STATED ONLY IN THE CONTEXT OF THE LIBERATION OF THE THREE COUNTRIES. EACH COUNTRY MUST JOIN OF ITS OWN ACCORD, ONLY AFTER LIBERATION. GIANG BECAME MORE AND MORE EBULLIENT AS HE HAD MORE DRINKS, ACCORDING TO THE JOURNALIST, AND REITERATED, "WE ARE GOING TO PUBLISH THESE DOCUMENTS." CONFIDENTIAL

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"NO NATION CAN EXERT PRESSURE TO FORCE THE OTHER TO JOIN (THE FEDERATION)." AFTER 1951, SINCE THERE WAS NO LONGER AN INDOCHINESE COMMUNIST PARTY, THE VIETNAMESE COMMUNIST PARTY HAS MAINTAINED THAT EACH COUNTRY WOULD HAVE ITS OWN SOVEREIGNTY. EACH PEOPLE WOULD BELONG TO THEIR OWN COUNTRY. EACH PEOPLE WOULD BECOME A NATION. THE IDEA OF A SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP" IS DIFFERENT, GIANG SAID. "IF WE HAVE SHARED EVERYTHING, THE INTERESTS OF OUR FRIENDS ARE OUR OWN. IF THEY ASKED FOR OUR HELP TO FIGHT AND WHEN THEY ASKED US TO GO, WE WENT. WHEN THEY ASKED US TO GO HOME, WE WENT." GIANG STATED, "IN THE LIBERATION OF PHNOM PENH, THERE WERE

VIETNAMESE TROOPS. THE CAMBODIANS DID NOT KNOW HOW TO USE MORTARS, MUCH LESS 130MM CANNONS," GIANG ADDED, WRYLY REFERRING TO RECENT CHINESE ASSISTANCE TO CAMBODIA.

9. "WHEN WE NEGOTIATED THE PARIS ACCORDS, I THOUGHT," SAID GIANG, "CAMBODIA ALSO SHOULD NEGOTIATE, BUT THEY DID NOT WANT TO. WE OFFERED TO HELP IF THEY WISHED TO FIGHT OR NEGOTIATE. WE HELPED. IS THIS NOT A 'SPECIAL RELATIONSHIP'? WHY DID THEY NOT WANT A COMBINATION? THEY WERE WEAK WITHOUT ENOUGH FORCES, BUT THEY COULD NOT GARNER STRENGTH. HOW COULD THEY WIN? THEIR WEAKNESS RESULTED ULTIMATELY IN TERRORISM AND THE DESTRUCTION OF CAMBODIA."

10. AFTER DINNER, GIANG WAS ASKED IF THERE WERE ANYTHING POL POT SHOULD FEAR IN CAMBODIA. HE REPLIED, "YES, REFUGEES SAY THAT THEIR FATHERS WERE KILLED BECAUSE THEY WERE PLOTTING AGAINST POL POT." ONE JOURNALIST NOTED THAT MANY PEOPLE HAD BEEN KILLED IN CAMBODIA AND ASKED IF THERE COULD STILL BE AN EFFECTIVE OPPOSITION. "PERSONNE NE SAIT" (NO ONE KNOWS), GIANG RESPONDED IN FRENCH. "THE PEOPLE OF CAMBODIA MUST RULE AND THEY MUST ALSO HAVE INFLUENCE ON NEGOTIATIONS (WITH VIET-NAM REGARDING THE BORDER). THERE ARE TWO POSSIBILITIES," GIANG SAID, "EITHER THE REGIME CHANGES ITS STANCE, OR THE PEOPLE WILL CHANGE THE SITUATION." (COMMENT: THE JOURNALIST INFERRED AT THIS POINT CONFIDENTIAL

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THAT GIANG MEANT THAT VIET-NAM WOULD HELP WITH THE ESTABLISHMENT OF "LIBERATED ZONES" IN CAMBODIA. IF THE CHINESE DID NOT INTERVENE, THE JOURNALIST SUSPECTED, GIANG MEANT THAT THE VIETNAMESE WOULD HELP THE CAMBODIAN PEOPLE EVEN MORE DIRECTLY. END COMMENT)

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11. THE JOURNALIST THEN ASKED IT THE SUPPORT FOR CAMBODIA
BY IMPERIALISTS AND INTERNATIONAL REACTIONARIES JUSTIFIED VIET-
NAMESE AID TO THE CAMBODIAN PEOPLE. "WHY DO THEY SUPPORT CAM-
BODIA", HE ASKED. "WHY?", REPORTED GIANG, "A STRONG VIET-NAM IS NOT GO
OD
FOR INTERNATIONAL REACTIONARIES BECAUSE THEY ARE MOST FEAR-
FUL OF OUR LINE, BECAUSE OUR LINE HAS BEEN THE MOST SUCCESS-
FUL," THEN, IN A TELLING REMARK, GIANG ADDED, "OF COURSE
VIET-NAM DOES NOT EXPORT REVOLUTION, BUT THE INFLUENCE OF
OUR LINE KNOWS NO BORDERS."

12. GIANG SAID THAT THIS IS THE REASON WHY IMPERIALISTS
WANT TO PROVE THAT VIET-NAM IS NOT SUCCESSFUL. THEY WANT
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TO PROVE THAT VIET-NAM WAS EFFECTIVE IN FIGHTING, BUT NOT
IN RECONSTRUCTION. THEY WANT TO PREVENT US FROM RECON-
STRUCTING. RESPONDING TO AN EARLIER QUERY, GIANG REPEATED
THE QUESTION, "WHO ARE THE INTERNATIONAL REACTIONARIES?
THE U.S., THAILAND, CHINA, THE SOVIET UNION? THEY DON'T AIM
TO INVADE US, BUT THEY WANT US TO FAIL. THEY DON'T WANT US
TO GROW, SO THAT THE STRENGTH OF OUR LINE (THE VIETNAMESE
REVOLUTION) WILL FAIL. BY LIMITING OUR CONSTRUCTION, THEY
CAN LIMIT OUR SOVEREIGNTY AND INDEPENDENCE."

13. ON JOURNALIST AT THE BACKGROUNDER THEN COMMENTED
THAT IT WAS UNUSUAL THAT THE REACTIONARIES HAD NOT TRIED
TO SABOTAGE VIET-NAM DIRECTLY AND ASKED IF THE MAJOR ENEMY
OF VIET-NAM HAS NOW CHANGED. GIANG ANSWERED, "THE FIRST
ENEMY HAS BEEN AND WILL ALWAYS BE AMERICAN IMPERIALISM."

14. ASKED FOR A CHRONOLOGY OF THE VIETNAMESE WAR WITH CAMBODIA, GIANG SAID THAT THE FIRST ATTACKS HAD BEGUN IMMEDIATELY AFTER LIBERATION, IN MAY, 1975. THE MOST SERIOUS "INVASIONS" BEGAN IN 1977. "THESE INVASIONS ARE CLOSELY RELATED TO THE DOMESTIC SITUATION (IN CAMBODIA)."

15. IN 1975-76, CAMBODIAN POLICY WAS TO HAVE RELATIONS WITH FOREIGN COUNTRIES, AND AT THE SAME TIME LIQUIDATE THE SUPPORTERS OF LON NOL AND SIHANOUK. AT THE END OF 1976, PHNOM PENH TOOK A DIFFERENT LINE. BETWEEN FEBRUARY AND APRIL, 1977, THERE WAS AN ATTEMPTED COUP D'ETAT, BECAUSE THE REGIME HAD LOST PRESTIGE. SUBSEQUENTLY, INTERNAL OPPOSITION WAS NOT DIMINISHED. FROM DOCUMENTS WE HAVE, GIANG CONTINUED, WE KNOW THAT, ACCORDING TO THE CAMBODIAN ANALYSIS, OPPOSITION TO THE REGIME, "CONSISTS OF CIA AGENTS FROM THAILAND, ELEMENTS FROM THE KGB FROM LAOS, AND ANOTHER KIND OF ENEMY - LACKEYS FROM VIET-NAM." THE CAMBODIAN
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GOVERNMENT REGARDS THE "LACKEYS" FROM VIET-NAM AS THE MOST DANGEROUS, GIANG SAID. BUT, HE CONTINUED, "NONE OF OUR ANALYSTS CAN UNDERSTAND HOW THE CIA CAN HAVE ANY CONNECTION WITH OUR AGENTS. IF THE CIA IS SUCCESSFUL, THERE WOULD STILL BE TWO POSSIBILITIES - TO FOLLOW THE CIA OR FOLLOW VIET-NAM. THE TWO SEEM CONTRADICTORY", GIANG DEDUCED. "WE HAVE NO SUCH ORGANIZATION IN CAMBODIA. MAYBE THEY MEAN EVERYBODY WHO FOLLOWS THE FIRST LINE. THE CAMBODIANS SEEM TO HAVE CONCENTRATED THEIR FORCES ON THAT PROBLEM, BUT THIS IS MY OWN EXPLANATION, DON'T QUOTE ME," GIANG REQUESTED. "IN 1975-76 WE WERE CAMBODIA'S FRIEND NUMBER 7 (SIC); AFTER 1977 WE BECAME CAMBODIA'S ENEMY NUMBER ONE," GIANG SAID.

16. THE FOLLOWERS OF THE FIRST LINE EXPOSED THEMSELVES AND SUBSEQUENTLY HAVE BEEN LIQUIDATED ON A LARGE SCALE. SINCE 1977 THE LIQUIDATION CAMPAIGN HAS BEEN ACUTE. THEY ARE ATTEMPTING TO LIQUIDATE OPPOSITION TO THE ROOTS TO ERADICATE THE FIRST LINE PERMANENTLY. "WE CANNOT UNDERSTAND THE REASONS FOR SO MUCH LIQUIDATION," GIANG COMMENTED. THERE WAS A PURGE OF GENERALS AND OF DIVISION COMMANDERS. FIVE OF 20 CENTRAL COMMITTEE PARTY MEMBERS DISAPPEARED. THEY LIQUIDATED ALL THE PARTY MEMBERS WHO WERE MEMBERS PRIOR TO 1960 AND ANYONE WHO HAS EVER OPPOSED POL POT. AFTER THESE MASSIVE LIQUIDATIONS OF PRE-1960 CADRES, THE COMMUNIST PARTY, WHICH HAD HERETOFORE BEEN CALLED ANGKA (THE ORGANIZATION), REVEALED ITSELF IN SEPTEMBER, 1977. TO JUSTIFY THE PURGES, THE CAMBODIANS HAVE CREATED THE BORDER DISTURBANCES.

17. "NEGOTIATIONS HAVE TO COME," GIANG SAID IN CONCLUSION.

"THIS (CAMBODIAN) POLICY CANNOT CONTINUE. OTHERWISE, THEY
WILL FAIL. THE CAMBODIAN PEOPLE ARE HEROIC. THEY KNOW WHAT
THEY MUST DO. THE POL POT LINE TRIED TO DIVIDE THE CAMBODIAN
PEOPLE, AND THEY WILL THEREBY BECOME WEAKER AND WEAKER.
IF THEY FOLLOW THE FIRST LINE, THEY WILL NOT BE WEAK."
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18. COMMENT: WE REGARD THE REMARKS BY GIANG AS TANTAMOUNT
TO ADMITTING THAT HANOI HAS AND WILL ACTIVELY ASSIST CAM-
BODIAN ELEMENTS SEEKING TO SUBVERT THE PHNOM PENH REGIME
AND OUST POL POT.

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